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ABSTRACT

As part of a study of the language used to conduct daily business in typical West German classroom situations, 30 native English speakers observed selected classroom interactions and used questionnaires to classify them and paraphrase them in English. The observers were from a variety of English-speaking countries, and some had explicitly educational backgrounds. The questionnaires given to the observers contained sentences eliciting terms in a wide variety of categories. Results obtained in some of the categories (reading, notebooks, teacher record books, teachers, absence notes, truancy, and marks) illustrate that this is a feasible method for obtaining such terminology. (MSE)

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CLASSROOM ENGLISH FOR GERMAN SCHOOLS

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1 Introduction

The present report is an attempt to present some of the results obtained in the course of an inquiry into the language which native speakers of English would use to refer to selected aspects of the German classroom situation. It is part of a larger project concerned with the development of teaching materials for the field of "classroom language", for German teachers of English (1).

By "classroom language" we mean the language used by teachers and pupils to conduct classroom business. Our problem is that not all aspects of the German classroom situation have direct equivalents in the English-speaking world: some are rather specific and characteristic of schools in Germany rather than elsewhere. If one maintains, as we do, that using the target language for as many aspects of a foreign language lesson as possible can make an important contribution to closing the credibility gap between classroom and reality, ways need to be found to also talk about the characteristically German aspects of the classroom situation in English, in an acceptable way.

To avoid jumping to conclusions, or to be dependant on individual opinions only, 30 native speakers from various parts of the English-speaking world were asked to paraphrase in English a number of situations as they might arise in German classrooms.

The present paper is a report on this inquiry. After a brief sketch of the background and a description of the method used we shall present and discuss some of the results obtained in the course of this investigation before, finally, suggesting how this information can be used for the proposed teaching materials.

2 Background

Recent analyses of the role of language in classroom communication (cf. survey in Voss 1984) have shown that classroom discourse is not only teacher talk, but includes pupil-teacher and pupil-pupil interaction as well. More importantly for our present purpose, the realisation has grown that a considerable proportion of the verbal interaction in the classroom, if we consider a lesson as a whole, is focussed on fields other than the explicit lesson topic itself: A child might have his birthday, the next test is to be announced or postponed, there are not enough worksheets to go round and two children must be asked to share a copy, a pupil cannot find his homework notebook, has not done his homework, needs to be told off for misbehaving, cannot see the blackboard properly, complains about a neigh-

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bour disturbing him, the whole class needs to be organised in groups for the next stage in the lesson, there is no chalk left and a child has to be sent to the janitor or secretary to get some more, etc.. All of these are aspects of a lesson involving language in a real communicative sense.

An attempt to systematise the various fields of reference of the verbal interaction occurring in the context of a lesson shows at least the following six fields of classroom discourse, (i) the topic itself, which obviously usually dominates the verbal interaction in the classroom, (ii) the real life situation of the teacher and the children in the classroom, (iii) the language, perhaps in the context of an explanation or a correction, (iv) discourse, in that teacher and pupils negotiate understanding and clear up misunderstandings, (v) organisation covering any of the many organisatory moves needed to keep classroom business going, and (vi) discipline (cf. fuller survey in Voss 1984).

Foreign language teachers do not necessarily accept all of these fields of classroom discourse as areas to be covered in the foreign language. While the first - and possibly also the third - tend to be somewhat automatically included in the foreign language parts of their lessons, many of the others are often not considered part of the lesson "proper", and are therefore dealt with in the mother tongue.

However, such a distinction between what is suitable for foreign language discourse and what is not has rather serious implications. It is easy to see that the fields often excluded in this way from being covered in the foreign language are in fact those which reflect aspects of the actual situation in which the teaching is carried out, i.e. the classroom situation itself. However, the classroom situation is the only genuine situation that institutionalised language teaching commonly provides. There is little doubt that the more these areas are excluded from foreign language discourse the more the learners must inevitably be left with the impression that the foreign language is only suitable for the verbalisation of the necessarily fictitious worlds of textbooks and other teaching materials. We would therefore argue very strongly in favour of an inclusion, as far as conceivably possible, of the actual classroom situation in all its aspects in what is dealt with in the foreign language. This would not only take advantage of an immediately relevant practice field in which language is used for real communicative purposes, but it would also help to close the credibility gap between classroom work and real life which otherwise would be inevitable.

While it may be easy to agree on the desirability of this approach in principle, the problems of putting this concept into practice are considerable. Teachers tend to receive little preparation for the classroom-related aspect of their foreign language command, within the framework of their training, nor do there seem to be many useful materials available to teachers interested in educating themselves in this respect on their own (cf. however, Hughes 1981, as a notable exception). In addition, however, what may even be more fundamental as a problem is the realisation that many aspects of the classroom situation of a particular country are in fact rather difficult to express in a foreign language at all.

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There are two major reasons for this difficulty. The first is connected with the different ways in which languages tend to conceptualise their surroundings: what may be easy to say in one language may have to be paraphrased in the other, because a directly corresponding term (and possibly also the concept that goes along with it) may not be available. A German child who cannot see properly what it says on the board because the light is reflected on the shiny surface so as to blur the chalk writing will want to say Die Tafel blendet, but will find no easy way of saying this in English (nor will the teacher be able to suggest one) because blenden in this sense cannot be directly translated into English, and a paraphrase such as Can I sit elsewhere? I cannot see the board properly may have to be one of various situationally appropriate solutions to this problem.

The second major reason for the difficulties often experienced with the verbalisation of the various aspects of the classroom situation in the target language has to do with the fact that foreign languages are typically taught in the school setting of the home country of the learners and not in the educational context of the target language. A German teacher will therefore need to be able to cope with the German school situation in English, and a German child may want to verbalise what happens in his own classroom, rather than in an imaginary one located in an English-speaking country. While no doubt many processes and procedures are identical or at least fairly similar in foreign language teaching situations anywhere, it is important to realise that this is by no means the case for all aspects of the classroom situation, many of which are in fact rather specific to the school setting in a particular country. The Klassenarbeitshefte need to be collected, Peter cannot find his Hausheft, and he has not kept his Aufgabenheft either, the Klassenlehrer wants the Klassenbuch, but the Klassenbuchführer is absent, the Tafeldienst has not cleaned the board, the Klassensprecher is to go to a meeting of the Schülerrat, the pupils want to know whether the next day will be hitzefrei: all of these represent definite concepts in the minds of German teachers and pupils, but have no direct equivalents in the English school setting, and no degree of familiarity with English classroom language in England - with concepts such as prefect, monitor, housemaster, register, rough book - fair (copy) book, etc. - will solve the problem of expressing these German concepts in English.

Clearly, in both cases the problem arises because the concepts suggested by the German language or by the German classroom situation can often only be paraphrased, rather than expressed directly, in a foreign language such as English, where lexicalisations for these concepts may not be readily available. If we accept that it is desirable in principle to cover as much of the actual classroom situation as possible in the foreign language, serious attempts must be made to arrive at acceptable English paraphrases of what German teachers and pupils might want to refer to.

In order to avoid having to invent our own paraphrases for this purpose - with the inherent danger of creating a kind of English only comprehensible within German classrooms - or having to rely on a few individual opinions only - with the danger of overgeneralising usages which may be unnecessarily regional or even idiosyncratic -, so native

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speakers of English from various parts of the English-speaking world were asked to paraphrase a number of such concepts as they might be needed in German classrooms. In what follows we shall report on this inquiry (2).

3 Method

The inquiry was conducted on the basis of an extensive questionnaire accompanied in each case by a face-to-face interview.

The subjects were native speakers of English from England(=13), the United States(=8), Ireland(=4), Canada(=3), Scotland(=1) and Wales (=1)(N = 30). All of them happened to be in Germany at the time of the interview, some on a passing visit to the country, some with up to 19 years of residence in it. Most of them were in the age range of 21-30 (=12), the next biggest age group were the 41-50 year-olds(=8), with the other ranges fairly evenly represented (31-40: =4, under 20 and over 50:=3each). The large majority must be considered to be very familiar with educational settings: 27 of them were either students (=10), teachers(=9) or lecturers(=7), and one was a school girl from England. While there is no doubt that the availability - and readiness to co-operate - of subjects for this inquiry was largely dictated by chance, the breakdown of the figures shows that the population was fairly well spread generally, with a desirable overrepresentation of interviewees with explicit educational backgrounds (3).

The questionnaire used in the inquiry was 12 pages long, with over 100 items arranged in groups pertaining to (i) the personal background of the interviewees, (ii) pupils' equipment, (iii) books, (iv) classroom surroundings, (v) classroom business, (vi) marks, (vii) discipline, and (viii) characterisations of teachers and pupils. The main problem in devising the format of the questionnaire was the need to develop an elicitation procedure enabling subjects who might have no or little command of German and practically no knowledge of German classrooms to co-operate in finding ways of talking about the German classroom situation. Although for each item the starting point naturally was a German concept, it was obviously not possible to simply list these in German and then ask subjects how they would render these in English, e.g. in a format such as "How would you say Die Tafel blendet in English?" Rather, it was necessary to develop descriptions and explanations of these concepts in English, and attempts had to be made to formulate these such as to eventually elicit a paraphrase of the concept required, as e.g. in the following example.

> Some blackboards have a fairly shiny surface, and sometimes the light is reflected in such a way as to make it impossible to read what is on the board from some positions in the room. In such cases, a pupil might complain by saying _____ (questionnaire page 6).

This approach made the questionnaire rather long - 12 pages are quite an imposition (although motivation to complete the task was helped along a little by being able to pay a small remuneration for completion). More importantly, however, there was of course no guaran-

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tee that the descriptions were unambiguous enough for the native speakers of English to form an idea of what exactly was meant in each instance. Therefore, interviews were conducted with the subjects after they had made a first attempt to complete the questionnaires on their own, and in these sessions, which took about an hour each, the questionnaires were gone through together and explanations added wherever it appeared that the descriptions had failed to function properly. Typically, subjects had considerable difficulties in switching over to conceptualising matters in the German way - often, initial replies drew attention to the fact that this "did not apply" followed by extensive explanations of the ways in which things were done in their home settings. These explanations were no doubt very interesting in themselves, but provided no help for the problems pinpointed here. A large proportion of the time of the interviews was therefore spent in persuading the subjects to at least try to suggest ways of what one might say for a particular concept (such as Klassenbuch) even if things were (obviously) organised differently at home. It might be added here that the interviews, certainly as far as conducted by the author himself, were personally very satisfying and provided him with highly interesting insights into the details of the day-to-day running of foreign language classes in many parts of the English-speaking world!

4 Results

Only a few of the over 3000 individual data obtained in this way can be presented and discussed here (cf. note 2).

As a start, it may be instructive to look at the results obtained in reply to descriptions of the German concepts of Lektüre, Notizbuch (of the teacher), Hausheft, Aufgabenheft, Arbeitsheft, and Klassenbuch, which are grouped together here because they all reflect aspects of the Buch/Heft notion in German. The formulation of the items is shown in Table 1, the results are listed separately for each item in Tables 2 - 7.

The results obtained in reply to item 1 (cf. Table 2) show (i) that native speakers would probably avoid the problem by using the title of the booklet to refer to it, and (ii) that if they wanted to be very precise they would have to say something like supplementary text/reading book/reader which is quite a mouthful and therefore unlikely to be used in a normal classroom. Vaguer terms suggested as suitable are reader and reading-book: although the first appears more frequently in the replies, it is often associated with publications providing selections from various sources rather than one story only, so that we would recommend the second as the better term to refer to what is called a Lektüre in foreign language teaching. In Germany - unless one adopts the native speaker's strategy of avoiding the term altogether in the way indicated above.

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Table 1

Item Group "Books" (page 3)

1	A book or booklet containing a continuous story, used in foreign language classes as reading material in addition to the actual course book, would be called a
2	The (octavo-sized) book which the teacher carries around with him and uses to note down information about the pupils performance and reminders about work still to be handed in etc. would be called a
3	A book used by pupils for writing in both in class (for classroom work) and at home (for homework) would be called a
4	A book used by pupils to note down what homework has been set for which subject and for which day would be called a
5	A book which the pupils use for writing in only when they do an official test in class would be called a
6	The book which contains the official record of the work done in class, of the marks given for the tests written during the school year, of instances of absence and of arriving late, and of any disciplinary measures taken in the case of individual pupils is called the
	of which there is one per class constantly kept at the school.

Table 2

Item 1 "Lektüre": Results

novel/text	novel/reader	(referred to by title of book)
reading book	reader	supplementary reader
(reading) book/ title would be named	text/story book	reader/reading book
reader	supplementary text	reader/book/story-book/ novel
supplementary reading book	text	reader
story (reading) book	supplementary reading book	novel
reader (more than 1 selection) reading book	literature book	reading book
booklets	reader	reader
text	story-book	
	reader	
	reader	

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Table 3

Item 2 "Notizbuch": Results

the black book	little red book	mark book
teacher's notebook	black book	(scholars') record book
punishment book	grade book	notebook/diary/mark book
little book	teacher's record	notebook/pocket-book
notebook	teacher's notebook	teacher's mark book
record book/ teacher's notebook	teacher's handbook the black book	scholars' record book
grade book/ teacher's notebook	diary/notebook	notebook
notebook	detention book	black book
notebook/grade book	teacher's notebook	diary
attendance book	mark book/ lesson notebook	

Part of the significance attached to the teacher's Notizbuch in the German system stems from its place in the record-keeping, large proportions of which are done at home by teachers, as a consequence of the halfday schooling system customary in Germany: since all official records must remain available at the school, some double book-keeping is necessary to enable teachers to work at home. Thus, although the teacher's Notizbuch is his own private property, pupils recognize immediately that he means business when starting to get his Notizbuch out during a lesson. The various versions offered in reply to this item (cf. Table 3) reflect different aspects of the functions the book may have without, however, covering them all. It seems that a general term such as (teacher's) notebook is the most suitable solution here, with the specification being left to the situational context in class.

A similar solution suggests itself in connection with the Aufgabenheft (cf. Table 4), for which (homework) notebook can serve as a version sufficiently unambiguous in the contexts in which it would be used. More precise versions could be assignment notebook or homework diary (the first probably marked as American English). It should be noted that the Aufgabenheft - which is often a specially arranged octavo-sized booklet with spaces on the margins to enter the lessons of the week in groups following the individual days and with empty lines to write the homework due for these periods against them - plays an important role in the life of a German school child. The half-day schooling usual in Germany tends to relegate most written work to homework, and to keep track of what is due for when can be quite complicated. Pupils are even asked to show their homework notebooks to see whether they in fact entered the homework set in the right space - and if this happens during an English lesson it would be useful to have an English term for it.

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Table 4

Item 4 "Aufgabenheft":Results

note book	assignment book	homework book
homework diary	assignment notebook	notebook
homework-notebook	assignment notepad/ reminder pad	notebook/homework book
notebook/jotter	homework book	notebook
pad/assignment book	assignment book	homework notebook/ jotter
appointment (calendar)book	homework notebook/ diary	exercise book
(homework)assignment notebook	homework diary	homework book/ prep-diary
calendar	homework diary	prep book
notebook reminder	homework diary	prep book
notebook	(write in back of homework book)	homework diary

The results of items 3 (Hausheft) and 5 (Arbeitsheft) are interesting to compare (cf. Table 5) because the distinction reflected in the German terms - the first as the book to be written into in class and at home generally and the second as the book only to be written into for written classroom tests which are thus collected in it - is not identical with distinctions such as rough(copy)book/jotter - fair (copy)book, and a test book is of course usually a (pre-printed) set of papers outlining the questions which are to be answered on individual sheets, for one individual test only. Not surprisingly, the answers show a wide spread of suggestions. Although notebook is technically correct, it should perhaps be avoided for Hausheft if it is made to serve other meanings as well (see above). Jotter/rough book are not quite appropriate for the homework aspect of the use the Hausheft (independantly of what some of the books actually might look like). Thus, exercise book appears as the most convenient solution. For Arbeitsheft, blue book is probably too regional to be useful, and test book although technically precise may be too long. This leaves notebook in spite of the slightly different associations connected with this term by native speakers of English.

The last item of this group (Klassenbuch, cf. Table 6) is again characterised by the problem of having to find a general term where in English more specific ones are used (register, record files, course record) to refer to the various aspects of the record-keeping involved for the effective administration of school life. It goes without saying that these various aspects are also handled in physically different records. In England - hence the different names - whereas in the German system all the information about the members of a class, the marks received, lessons held, attendances etc. is collected in

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Table 5

Items 3/5 "Hausheft" "Arbeitsheft": Results

Hausheft		
exercise book	notebook	exercise book
jotter	notebook	rough book
copy/exercise book	notebook	exercise book
exercise book	notebook	exercise book
notebook	exercise book	exercise book
notebook	exercise book	exercise book
homework/ class notebook	exercise book (rough book)	exercise book
notebook	exercise book	
notebook	exercise book	
essay book	exercise book	
Arbeitsheft		
exercise book	blue book	test book
good copybook	blue book	exercise book/test book
test copy	blue book	exercise book/test book
exam book	testbook(let)/ testsheet/exam-	test book
test notebook		test book
test booklet	test/exam folder	test-book
test notebook	test book	(test book)
test booklets	test book	test book
blue book	test book	

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Table 6

Item 6 "Klassenbuch": Results

record book	grading book/register	register
report book	roll book register	class register (names only)
assessment records	course record	register
register/class record book	student record (markbook)	(record files)
role book/record book	markbook/teacher's register	official scholars' record book
grade book/official record book	official record book	mark book/register/ punishment book
class book/class register	form book	mark book/register
grade book	black book	record of work book/ lesson planners/ mark book
attendance book	register	
attendance book	(various filing systems)	
	report book	

one book. The answers obtained reflect this difficulty in that they either highlight one of the aspects only (grade book, attendance book, black book etc.), or suggest a combination of these (e.g. mark book/ register/ punishment book)which is descriptive rather than a usable solution, or simply point out the incompatibility of the systems (e.g. various filing systems; class register:names only) which is factually correct but does not solve the problem.

Naturally, it is inappropriate to expect a single "correct" solution, in these cases. What is needed are suggestions which are least likely to be either misleading or incomprehensible to native speakers of the language. Since the term record can be taken to cover records of all kinds (attendance, performance, behaviour, course work etc.) we would suggest record book as a way of referring to the Klassenbuch of German schools, in preference to the clumsier if more precise register and record book put forward in some of the answers.

The second group of items to be presented here tries to elicit paraphrases for the German concepts of Klassenlehrer, Entschuldigung, schulfrei (lesson, day(s)). While the first of these might again come up against the problem of different organisatory structures, the others were included because we were interested in seeing what could - and would - be said colloquially, below the level of official language.

Table 7 shows how the descriptions of the above concepts were formulated.

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Table 7

Item Group "Classroom Business" (page 7, items 1-4)

1	In each class, there is usually one teacher who is specially responsible for administrative matters, writing out the reports, checking the register and record book, contacting parents if necessary, organising outings for the class etc.. This teacher is called the
2	After an absence a child is supposed to bring _____ _____ from the parents to explain why it was absent.
3	If a child deliberately stays away from an individual lesson without a reasonable excuse s/he is said to _____.
4	If the child deliberately stays away from school altogether s/he is said to _____.

Table 8

Item 1 "Klassenlehrer(in)": Results

Form Master/Mistress	homeroom teacher	class teacher/form teacher
form teacher	homeroom teacher	class(form)teacher
class/form Mistress/ Master	homeroom teacher	form mistress
class teacher	homeroom teacher	form master/ Mistress /Teacher
homeroom teacher	home teacher	form tutor
class sponsor/homeroom teacher	form teacher	class teacher
homeroom teacher	form teacher	form teacher
homeroom teacher	form teacher	
homeroom teacher	tutor	
home-room teacher/ class administrator	Form Master/Mistress	
	Form Teacher	
	class teacher/form master	

The spread obtained in the replies to the item Klassenlehrer(in) (cf. Table 8) is not due to any lack of a general norm - as was the case with some of the items in the previous group - but appears to be the result of straightforward regional variation. American/ Canadian informants suggested homeroom teacher, and British ones form teacher. In spite of considerable [illegible] there seems to

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be enough common ground in the function involved to recommend to German teachers the use of either of these terms to express the concept of Klassenlehrer, and the choice would probably depend on the emphasis on either British or American English in that classroom. German teachers might note that the term class teacher was only suggested by 5 (British) informants, all over 40 years of age, 4 of whom with long periods of residence in Germany.

Table 9

Item 2 "Entschuldigung": Results

a note	a written excuse	a note
a note	a letter/note	a sick note/a letter
a letter/note of excuse	a note/note of absence	an absence note/ sick note
an excuse/letter of excuse	a note	a letter
an excuse/an absence note	an explanatory note	a sick note
an excuse	absence note	a letter
an excuse	an absence note	a note
an excuse note	a note	an absence note
excuse	a note	
an excuse	a sick note	
	a letter	
	a note	

The concept of an "Entschuldigung" in the sense of a written statement by parents to explain why their child did not attend school does not seem to be difficult to express (cf. Table 9) and there is quite a range of acceptable terms available, of which the handiest appear to be excuse, (sick/absence)note.

What is perhaps more interesting to see is the way in which staying away from school deliberately, for a lesson or for longer, is referred to informally, i.e. between pupils, or perhaps at home, rather than officially at school. As Table 10 shows, the answers represent both formal and informal versions, with playing truant the most general one in use. Skipping/cutting class is frequently mentioned with the meaning of [illegible]. Informal variations add colour to the repertoire ([illegible], bunking, pinching, swagging it, legging it, playing hookie (AE)). But should teachers be [illegible] with care (if at all) by [illegible] speakers. Our initial idea that it might be necessary in English to observe a clear terminological distinction between staying away for an individual lesson, on the one hand, and a day or more on the other, was not systematically supported by the answers obtained: the first case is usually specified by referring to a class or lesson missed that way, and the distinction can therefore be neg-

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Table 1o

Items 3,4 "schwänzen" (lesson, day): Results

"schwänzen" (Stunde)		
be dobbing/skiving/ mitching	have skipped class	truant/wag it
skip class	skipped class/cut class	skive off
doss a class	be skipping class	have absconded
mitch/miss a class	be skipping/playing hooky	play truant
cutting a class	skip class	cut the lesson (class)
skip class/play truant	skip class	play truant
be playing hookie/ skipping	skip a lesson/ to skive off	missing a lesson
skip class	mitch/skive	wag
cut class	skive	skiving
		skiving

"schwänzen" (Tag)		
be dobbing	be playing hookey	have left
play truant/scheming school mitching/ skiving	be truant	play truant
	be skipping	play truant
play truant/doss	skip school/play truant	playing truant
mitch/play truant	truant	wag/play truant
be truant/playing hookey	play truant	play truant
	leg it (Lincolnshire)/ mitch/truant (be truanting)	playing truant
delinquent		play truant/mitch take French leave
hookie (whole day) skipping (for either)	skive	wagging it
	truant/wag it	
be skipping class/ playing hookey	truant/have the day off	
play hooky		
be truant	have played truant	

lected from a language point of view as not being lexicalised - as is also true for German.

In the final groups of items to be presented and discussed here, we were interested in possible paraphrases of the marks given in the German school system. These go from 1 at the top to 6 at the bottom of the scale, with conventionalised paraphrases (sehr gut, gut, befriedigend, ausreichend, mangelhaft, ungenügend) in addition to the figure names themselves. The descriptions were formulated as in

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Table 11, the results are shown in Tables 12a and 12b.

Table 11

Item Group "Marks" (page 9, items 1 - 6)

There are six marks available in the German system to assess the child's school performance. They go from one to six. The first four are pass marks and can be paraphrased as follows

the highest possible mark is a "1" = _____
the second highest mark is a "2" = _____
the neutral, average mark is a "3" = _____
the "just pass" mark is a "4" = _____

The other two marks are non-pass marks and express two levels of failure.

inadequate work but not beyond help is a "5" = _____
the lowest possible mark is a "6" = _____

The results obtained are not easy to interpret and are reminders of the linguistic truism that the meaning of items in a closed set is largely determined by the co-presence, and rank, of the other items in it. While most informants agreed on using excellent for the very best mark, very good can only be the very best if there is no excellent to precede it: in all other cases it is used to refer to the second best mark. A similar shift can be observed in connection with good: it is only used for second best, if the top mark is very good, or excellent with no very good following: in all other cases it refers to the average mark. A frequent alternative given for the average mark is satisfactory, which, however, also appears as a mark a grade lower than average, in other words as the lowest pass mark. The two non-pass marks are either both given as fail, or a distinction is drawn between poor and very poor/bad. It is interesting to observe that many native speakers tried to express German marks in terms of their own marking conventions (using letters from A-E/F, or giving percentages); on the other hand, practically all suggestions were consistent in themselves even if the same term (e.g. satisfactory) would serve different purposes in the different schemes suggested.

On the basis of the answers obtained here, we would recommend to the German teacher of English the use of the following terms - as alternatives to the names of the figures as such -: 1 = excellent/very good, 2 = good, 3 = satisfactory/average, 4 = pass/fair, 5 = poor, 6 = very poor/bad.

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Table 12a

Marks 1-3: Results

"sehr gut"	"gut"	"befriedigend"
A (75%) excellent	B (55%) very good	C (45%) good
excellent A	very good B	good C
A (85-100%) excellent	B (70-84%) very good	C (55-70%) good
excellent	very good	good/fair
excellent work	good work	satisfactory
A excellent	B good	C average
A very good/ excellent	B good	C satisfactory
A (excellent)	B above average	C average
A excellent	B above average	C average
A excellent	B good	C average
A excellent	B above average	C average
A excellent	B good	C satisfactory
90-100% A exceptional	75-90% B good	60-75% C average
A excellent	B very good	C+, C, C-good
100% A the best	80% B above average	65% C average
excellent	good	average
excellent	very good	fairly good
A excellent	B very good	C satisfactory
A excellent	B good	C average
very good	good	average
A excellent	B very good	C good
very good/ excellent	good	satisfactory
excellent	good (very good)	average/good
A	B	C
10/10 topmark	9/10	5/10-4/10
A excellent	B very good	C good
very good	good	satisfactory
A excellent	good	average

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Table 12b

Marks 4-6: Results

"ausreichend"	"mangelhaft"	"ungenügend"
C/D (35%) average below average	D (35%) below average	E/F (25%) poor failure
fair D	bad E	very bad V
D (40-54%) satisfactory	E (35-39%) insufficient	F (1o-24%) N.G (no grade)
a pass/a bare pass	fail	a hopeless fail
passing	unsatisfactory	failing "a zero"
D below average	I incomplete	F failure
D sufficient	F fail/inadequate	F fully inadequate
D below average	possibility of failing	flunk
D unsatisfactory	F fail	F fail
D adequate	inadequate	F failure
D below average	F failed	F failed
D passing	E failure with hope	F failure
5o-6o% D sufficient	4o-5o% E inadequate	below 4o% F wholly inadequate
D satisfactory	E insatisfactory	F definite fail
5o% D below average	2o-5o% E	o-2o% F failure
fair	poor	very poor
fair	below average	poor
D could do better	E	V unclassified
D satisfactory	E below average	F very poor
satisfactory	below average	very poor
D fair	E poor	F very poor
fair	poor/weak	very poor/weak
pass	poor/weak	very poor
D 4/1o	E 3/1o	F o/1o fail/worst mark
D fair	E poor	F very poor
fairly good	only fair	weak E
below average	poor	very bad

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5 Conclusions

In the present paper an attempt has been made to present and discuss some of the results obtained in the course of an investigation into the language which native speakers of English would use to refer to selected aspects of the German classroom situation.

We have argued that it is important to include the actual classroom situation of the learners as far as possible within the foreign language parts of foreign language lessons. However, foreign languages are typically learnt in the educational environment of the learner's home contry, rather than that of the target language. This means that a direct transfer of the classroom language connected with e.g. English institutional surroundings is not possible: German children and teachers need to find ways of verbalising their own surroundings which very often are rather different.

In order to avoid making suggestions which would lead to a negative kind of "classroom English" incomprehensible to native speakers of the language, outside German classrooms, a survey was conducted asking 30 native speakers of English from various parts of the English-speaking world to paraphrase in English a number of classroom situations as they might arise in German classrooms. This was done on the basis of an extensive questionnaire, followed up by a face-to-face interview. A major problem turned out to be the need, for the questionnaire, to develop an elicitation procedure enabling also subjects with no or next to no German and practically no knowledge of German classrooms to participate in finding ways of talking about the German classroom situation. The solution eventually adopted of presenting the subjects with carefully phrased descriptions (in English) of the various concepts to be expressed hopefully in usable English paraphrases was not always successful: major parts of the interviews were spent on additional explanations where care was needed not to suggest what the interviewer wanted to hear in the first place.

The results - only some of which could be presented and discussed here - show that the procedure adopted for this investigation is a possible way of arriving at the information required. As we have seen, this does not mean that the answers obtained are always easy to interpret nor that can they be incorporated into e.g. a German English teacher's classroom language repertoire directly, i.e. without any further interpretation. But we hope to have been able to show that the data obtained in this way are both necessary and useful as a basis for recommendations in this field.

As stated at the beginning, this investigation is part of a larger project concerned with the development of teaching materials for the field of "classroom language" for German teachers of English. It has proved to be very helpful in placing these materials on sounder foundations and will hopefully, in the long run, make a substantial contribution to encouraging teachers and pupils in Germany to exploit more of their own classroom situation for foreign language interaction than is often the case at present, by showing how this can actually be done.

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Notes

1 supported by grant No. 8546 of the University of Bielefeld.

2 Only some of the data obtained in the course of this investigation can be presented here. More information is available from the author, on request. A fuller report is in preparation.

3 I wish to record my thanks here to John Hardman, who as a student assistant to the project helped to find a large number of the native speakers who eventually participated, and who conducted a fair number of the interviews.

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